Press release

PRINTABLE VERSION

Outlook good for retailers and manufacturers

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The forecast is looking brighter than ever for UK retailers and manufacturers. A new improved service from the Met Office will enable demand and marketing managers to greatly improve their sales and demand forecasts.

Called the Monthly Outlook, it's set to become an invaluable business planning tool. It provides information out to 30 days ahead enabling planners to predict the impact of weather on their business.

Although the Met Office has been producing a monthly weather forecast service for nearly 10 years, following research with key customers it was decided the service needed to be redesigned.

The resulting Monthly Outlook has been tailored to meet the specific needs of retailers and manufacturers. It incorporates a modern layout which is easy to use and navigate, makes better use of graphics, and offers information in a format that is relevant to demand and marketing managers. Additionally it offers improved reliability, greater flexibility and proven accuracy.

Tim Ormerod, Product Manager for the Monthly Outlook, thinks the new-look service will bring many benefits to customers, and said: "We're confident the improved Monthly Outlook is a valuable risk assessment tool that can help planners anticipate changes in demand more confidently. It is invaluable in helping to manage resources more effectively, especially when used alongside shorter-term forecasting services. We're pleased with its new look, and this is the first step in an ongoing process of improving the service."

The Monthly Outlook is a fortnightly service giving retailers and manufacturers a 30-day forecast for 10 different regions in the UK, combining forecaster output, graphics and tabular data. It's based on a state-of-the-art dynamic weather model and uses forecast and historical data to give an overview of the weather during the monthly period.

The service is divided into four main sections:

- Forecasters' outlook - expert advice offered by our forecasters;
- Outlook data - rainfall, minimum and maximum temperatures, degree days and sunshine information;
- Summary data - forecast information for the whole month, giving comparisons with the weather 'average', recent history and last year to enable demand comparisons;
- Probability data - probabilities of different types of weather occurring.

Visit the Monthly Outlook for Retail page to learn more about the Monthly Outlook.

Note:

Using long-term forecasting the Monthly Outlook can help retailers to:

- increase profitability through improved demand forecasting;
- save money by reducing wastage and storage space;
- maintain competitive advantage by optimising stock levels;
- predict timing of seasonal changes;
- manage staff and labour resources more efficiently.

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